Bhunter Airport

308. SHRI SAT MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Bhunter (Kullu) aerodrome in Himachal Pradesh is not fully capable to handle the vast tourist inflow to Kullu , Manali, Manikaran, Berskund and other important hilly stations in and around the valley;

(b) if so, whether any proposal for the expansion of this airport is under consideration of the Government ;

(c) the time by which the proposal is likely to be cleared and work of expansion of the airport started; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATRAJAN) : (a) Bhunter Airport belongs to Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the airport infrastructure is suitable for operation of 20 seater type of aircraft and is fit for fair-weather operations only due to hilly terrain.

(b) Yes,Sir. On the request of the State Govt. AAI is planning upgradation of Bhunter airport for 50 seater type of aircraft, which will require construction of a new Terminal Building and extension of runway. Request for additional land measuring approximately 17 acres has been placed with the state Govt. The work of construction of a bund and a retaining wall along the river Beas to check soil erosion of airport operational area has already been undertaken by AAI.

(c) and (d) The time frame for the upgradation of the airport will be decided after the state Govt. confirms the availability of the land for expansion of the airport.

Railway Projects

309. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have declined to give its approval to some Railway projects announced for construction in the Budget 1997-98 ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) (a) and (b) No,Sir. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs have desired for a comprehensive note on the on-going project including those in the pipeline with their prioritisation and pattern of funding, before the projects are considered for approval.

Corruption Cases

310. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of corruption, dishonesty and assets disproportionate to the income of civil servants investigated by the Vigilance Department of Ministry in 1995-96;

(b) the number of officers (Grade-wise) involved in the above;

(c) the number of complaints received for corruption and dishonesty in the 1995-96 and the action taken thereon;

(d) Whether the Vigilance Department initiate action suo moto against the staff suspected to be dishonest and corrupt; and

(e) whether the Ministry have made any review of the functioning of power of the vigilance section under their control and , if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) No case was investigated by the Vigilance section in the Ministry against any officer or member of staff working in the Ministry .

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No complaint of corruption and dishonesty was received against any officer or member of staff working in the Ministry of Steel during 1995-96.

(d) The Vigilance Section in the Ministry can initiate action *suo-moto* against staff suspected to be dishonest and corrupt if *prima facie* case exists, as per procedure.

(e) Review of Vigilance work in various organisations under the Ministry is being undertaken periodically. During the current year three such reviews have taken place.

Delhi-Karachi Route

311. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL :
SHRI K.P. NAIDU :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Air Traffic Controllers have pointed out that the bifurcation of the Delhi-Karachi route by the Airport Authority of India is faulty and dangerous to flight safely; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken in the matter ?